

7. THE SOUTHERN GREEN PIGEON (*TRERON
PHOENICOPTERA CHLORIGASTER* BLYTH) IN KUTCH

While sitting in the varandah of the 'Darbari Utara' (i.e. the Maharaos residence at Mata-no-Madh), in the morning of the 30th Jan. 1980, I saw this bird flying away from a Peepul Tree within the compound, flushed apparently by a crow, where it had been eating the fruit. The pigeon flew away from the compound, but not before I could identify it positively. In the past, I had shot several of them for the table, near Mitiyala (in the former State of Bhavnagar) close to the Gir Forest; and could therefore, recognise and identify the bird immediately.

Later in the day, I casually mentioned this sighting to my Father, with whom I was camping at Mata-no-Madh; and he advised that as the Southern Green Pigeon was not reported

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BHUJ-KUTCH,
February 1, 1980.

from Kutch. I should obtain a specimen for positive identification.

The following morning at about the same time, I saw the bird once more, and collected it.

Subsequent enquiries at Mata-no-Madh revealed that a pair of these birds have been noticed in the grove of trees near the Chachara Kund (which is a Sacred bathing Tank situated near the Darbari Utara), for quite some time.

According to the BIRDS OF SAURASHTRA by R. S. Dharmakumarsinhji, the main habitat of this bird in Saurashtra is in the Gir Forest and it is merely a rare straggler in Wankaner and Dhrangadhra. In the BIRDS OF KUTCH by Sálím Ali, it is just listed in the Appendix on page 171.

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8. POSSIBLE INTERSPECIFIC HYBRIDS BETWEEN *COLUMBA
LIVIA* AND *C. RUPESTRIS*

Returning from Leh by jeep through Ladakh and down to Kargil and the Zoji La Pass I noticed that the common pigeon, the Rock Dove (*Columba livia*) seems now to have worked its way up the roads which have been constructed in the past 20 years. The highway leading from the Zoji La right up through the Lamayuru area and above to an altitude of 12,000 feet (3658 m) was notable for frequent flocks or small groups of Rock Doves. By contrast, the Hill Pigeon *Columba rupestris* normally seen only in barley fields at higher altitudes seems now to descend along the roadway in nearby cultivation to 11,000 feet

(3353 m).

In the Lamayuru area at 11,500 (3505 m) to 12,000 (3658 m) feet on July 3rd we noticed while driving along the road frequent groups of pigeons flying up and off the road in family aggregations of three or four. On one occasion a group of four birds included three Hill Pigeons, *rupestris*, and one gray tailed *livia*. On another occasion a bird with a gray tail, at rest, on flying up showed white inner margins to the outer tail feathers above the presence of the darker band. I believe that in these mixed parties of white-banded tailed *rupestris* and gray-banded tailed *livia* there is a possibility